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To: Joshua Gross <joshua.gross@fgsglobal.com>

Subject: Somaliland's Presidential Election

Good morning,

I am writing today to inform you that the Republic of Somaliland's Cabinet has approved the budgets for the upcoming political party elections and the subsequent presidential elections.

This is the latest in a series of steps reaffirming the Government's commitment to upholding the new election timeline set forth by the National Electoral Commission (NEC) earlier this month. Following the Cabinet's recent budget approval, the Office of the President [tweeted](#) "With the approval of Somaliland's 2023 budget, the National Election Commission ([@SLNECHQ](#)) has the resources necessary to begin the voter registration process, enabling us to hold elections as soon as possible in 2023, directed by the NEC's timeline."

As you may know, the NEC recently established a timeline for preparations that will lead to Somaliland's next presidential election in July 2023. In [announcing](#) this timeline, the NEC explained that financial constraints and delays in both voter registration and the registration of political parties – which were caused by delays in the appointment of members to the NEC itself – required an adjustment to the previous November 2022 election schedule.

Over the past month, the National Political Parties Registration Committee has worked to obtain the requisite signatures from registered voters to confirm the eligible political parties across Somaliland. That process, which included [observation by civil society organizations](#), is now complete. The NEC will now turn to facilitating the election of political parties, which will determine the final pool of candidates for the presidential election in July 2023.

To ensure that Somaliland's government could continue to function between the expiration of President Muse Bihi Abdi's term on November 13 and the July 2023 election, the upper chamber of Somaliland's Parliament then voted to extend the president's term in order to accommodate this new schedule. These actions were fully within its constitutional authority, which has been exercised on multiple occasions in the past to ensure that preparations can be made for the proper conduct of presidential and parliamentary elections.

Throughout this process, the government has reiterated that it remains committed to Somaliland's Constitution and the requirements established by the NEC. In a recent [statement](#), President Bihi affirmed that "My administration will work with Somaliland's democratic institutions to ensure that the upcoming presidential election is held as expediently as possible, with guidelines established by the NEC. We further commit to continue dialogue with all political stakeholders in the hope that we will come together as fellow citizens to advance our democratic processes and dispense with provocative rhetoric and actions that are meant to sow division."

Experts closely monitoring developments in the region have [acknowledged](#) the government's intention to hold elections as expeditiously as possible.

As an unrecognized government, Somaliland's public institutions receive little international assistance. The NEC is no exception, and Somaliland's ability to finance the upcoming election process is constrained by the enormous costs associated with its recovery from April's Waheen Market fire (with \$2 billion in estimated damages), the ongoing drought across the region, global inflation, and rising energy prices resulting from the war in Ukraine. As a result, the Somaliland government is intensifying its dialogue with the donor community to ensure that needs related to election financing and technical assistance are identified and addressed.

Please do not hesitate to reach out should you have any questions regarding these developments.

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